



FEMA

NEWS RELEASE STATE/FEDERAL DISASTER FIELD OFFICE JOINT INFORMATION CENTER



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Mitigate to Reduce Future Flood Damage *Building Permits required for flood repairs and improvements*

EVERETT, WA – Residents who need to make repairs or rebuild as a result of the October floods have a responsibility to themselves, their families and their neighbors to rebuild in a way that reduces future flood losses. This is called ‘mitigation’.

Mitigation steps that can be taken to protect homeowners from suffering repetitive loss include rebuilding with materials less likely to be damaged by water and raising utility connections and electrical outlets. Owners should avoid building in a flood plain unless they elevate and reinforce the structure and/or seal walls in basements with waterproofing compounds to avoid seepage through cracks.

“Not only does mitigation save life and property,” said Anthony Russell, federal coordination official for the disaster, “a mitigated home may also qualify for lower-cost flood insurance, made available through the National Flood Insurance Program (NFIP).”

Local disaster officials and authorities from the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) urge everyone making repairs, rebuilding or taking any mitigation measures to get a **building permit**. These permits may be required by law, and may keep homeowners from unpleasant surprises when buying insurance, filing a claim or selling the property in the future. Local governments are strictly enforcing building ordinances designed to reduce losses in flood-prone areas.

“We have a responsibility to help prevent loss of life and property and to conserve taxpayer money by supporting the enforcement of local regulations,” said Diane Offord, state coordinating official for the disaster. “While the government can help flood victims get back on their feet, we don’t want our neighbors and friends to go through repetitive suffering.”

On March 1, 2003, FEMA became part of the U.S. Department of Homeland Security. FEMA's continuing mission within the new department is to lead the effort to prepare the nation for all hazards and effectively manage federal response and recovery efforts following any national incident. FEMA also initiates proactive mitigation activities, trains first responders, and manages the National Flood Insurance Program and the U.S. Fire Administration.

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